

Angered by Slurs On Father, Warner Accused His Widow

Pension Commissioner
Alleged Taint of
Negro Blood.

Stepmother Refused All
of His Offers of
Compromise.

One of the strangest accusations ever made in a will contest has just been passed upon by Judge Cochran, in the Dewitt county court, says Charles L. Leichter, in the Chicago Record-Herald, writing from Clinton, Ill. It is in the celebrated case of Mrs. Isabella Robinson Warner against United States Commissioner of Pensions Vespasian Warner. It involves the disposal of half a million dollars in cash and property.

Col. Vespasian Warner, who has been prominent in the public life of Illinois for more than a decade and who now occupies one of the most important appointive offices under the Roosevelt administration, has accused his stepmother of having negro blood in her veins.

It has never been stated previously that in taking the action he did, he was carrying out the expressed wish of his father and, to a certain extent, was actuated by a desire to vindicate the memory of his parent, which had been assailed and impugned by the second wife of the father of the Commissioner of Pensions, and also by the two daughters, as much the children of the deceased man as is Colonel Warner himself.

Father a Pioneer in Illinois.

Dr. John Warner, the father of the commissioner, was a pioneer in Illinois. He located at Farmer City, in Dewitt county, in 1841. Commissioner Warner was born in Farmer City, then a typical straggling frontier hamlet, in 1842. From the time that Dr. Warner came to Illinois from Virginia, where he was born and grew to young manhood, he prospered financially.

When he arrived in Farmer City his earthly possessions were a wife, a horse, and buggy, and two or three medical books that he had accumulated while studying medicine.

When he died in December, 1905, he left to his heirs an estate appraised by the master in chancery at \$1,650,000.

Vespasian Warner's Career.

Col. Vespasian Warner has had, personally, an unusual career. He has lived in Washington and away from his home town for upward of thirteen years. He represented his district in Congress for ten years, from 1893 to 1903. Then he became a candidate for the Republican nomination for governor of the State of Illinois in the memorable campaign which resulted, after one of the most remarkable deadlocks ever witnessed in a political convention, in the nomination of the present governor, Charles S. Deneen. For the past three years he has been Commissioner of Pensions.

Mrs. Isabella Warner, the woman against whom the charge of birth is brought, came to Clinton from her Ohio home as the bride of Dr. John Warner, in the early part of June, 1874. She has lived here continuously ever since. Her two daughters were born and reared in Clinton. Their home has been for three decades the social center of the little city. Mrs. Warner herself, a large, dignified, and handsome woman, has performed many acts of friendliness and gentle and unostentatious charity that have endeared her to the people of this entire section of country.

John Warner's Romance.

The events leading up to the marriage of John Warner and Isabella Robinson were as romantic as are to be found in the earlier history of Illinois. John Warner, whose family name in Virginia was Verner, he being of German descent, got the Western fever when he was barely of age. He had been a medical student in the office of a Virginia physician. Having accumulated a buckboard and a horse he set out for the untamed West, with the idea in mind of taming his share of it. He got as far as Henry county, Indiana, when his funds gave out and he found it necessary to stop awhile and accumulate more capital.

He obtained a position as a clerk in a country store, and incidentally, in his spare moments, continued the study of medicine in the office of an Indiana physician. He remained there about nine months, and during that time became acquainted with and married a Miss Gardner, the daughter of a farmer.

Shortly after his marriage, having accumulated a few dollars, he and his bride set out upon a honeymoon that was in those early days not unusual. Taking their earthly possessions with them, they started with the horse and buggy with the comparatively unexplored Southwest as their destination. They pursued their journey with little to vary the monotony of unbroken prairie until they came to Farmer City.

Besought Doctor to Stay.

There they happened upon a woman who was very ill. With his knowledge of medicine, Dr. Warner undertook, in the absence of a graduate physician, to prescribe for her ailment. The woman, whose life had been despaired of, regained her health and, the community being without a physician, Dr. Warner was prevailed upon by the settlers to remain there temporarily. So he hung out his primitive shingle, and in the course of time, being successful in the practice of his profession and a born money-maker, he accumulated a commodious log house and some property.

Dr. Warner practiced medicine in Farmer City for a few years, then



COL. VESPAasian WARNER,

Who Alleges That His Step-Mother Deceived His Father, and Has Negro Blood in Her Veins.

moved to Clinton. Vespasian Warner, his first child, was born in Farmer City, shortly after the Warners settled there. Asked about the business his father had followed after he gave up his medical practice, his son, Colonel Warner, said, with a twinkle in his eyes: "My father bought land. He never sold much."

That, doubtless, is the secret of the large wealth accumulated by Dr. Warner. He bought land and held to it. Property for which he paid \$10 and \$11 per acre now is worth, "with your eyes shut," as old timers here in Clinton say, \$200 per acre.

During the stirring days preceding the civil war Dr. John Warner was the friend and confidant of many men whose names are written large upon the history of the country. Clinton was, as it is now, the county seat of Dewitt county. Thither came Abraham Lincoln, "riding circuit" with the circuit judge, and the phalanx of lawyers who made a livelihood out of the differences and the crimes of the early settlers.

When the war broke out, Vespasian

Warner then was a stripling of nineteen. He was afflicted with consumption, and no one thought he could live more than six months. He got the fever at the first call. He had it before, for at the tavern he heard much of the differences of the unhappy country from the lips of Lincoln, Douglass, and the other statesmen giants of those strenuous times. Going to his father he asked permission to join the army. "Nonsense, boy," said the old doctor. "You wouldn't stand camp life and marching and fighting six months."

"But I won't live six months here, father," said young Warner. Finally Dr. Warner consulted the family physician. That individual agreed with the opinion of young Warner that he could not live six months if he remained at home.

"Army life either will kill him or cure him," said the blunt old doctor. So Dr. Warner said no more. He neither gave nor withheld his consent, and young Warner entered the service as a private. Less than six months afterward he

Love Nullifies Larceny; But Girl's Purse Goes

She Uses Sweetheart's Pocket as Safe Deposit Vault, and Then Wants to Prosecute Him For Stealing.

IOWA FALLS, Iowa, Aug. 17.—If a girl has the right to go through a sweetheart's pockets after a marriage, has a young man the right to appropriate his future wife's pocketbook before marriage?

Miss Letta Slutter, a school teacher at Ackley, and Joseph Stonebreaker had been keeping company. Miss Slutter had sufficient confidence in her

companion to place her pocketbook in his pocket for safekeeping. The pocketbook and money, disappeared, and she accused him of stealing it.

The judge decided he couldn't hold the young man for larceny as they were engaged to be married, and his permission to allow his sweetheart to use his pocket as a safe deposit vault would render void any judgment for conviction.

was promoted to a second lieutenant. He served all through the war with distinguished honor, and at the close was sent to the Western plains to help subdue the Indians that had taken to the warpath at the cessation of hostilities between the Northern and Southern armies.

At the conclusion of the hard life of a soldier, he left the army with the rank of major and with as sound a pair of lungs as sleeping in the open air on the ground, riding horseback daily, and eating the plain rations could give any man. Today he is as sound a man physically, despite his sixty-five hard years, as can be found in a day's walk along the streets of Washington.

After the war he finally settled down at home, studied law and formed a partnership with the man who later became his father-in-law, and of whose \$2,000,000 estate "Pash" Warner is now the sole executor, C. H. Moore.

Woeing of Robinson Girl.

About the close of the civil war Dr. Warner's wife died. He remained a widower until 1874. In 1871 he was traveling through Kansas. The train on which he was riding was delayed by a washout on the line. The passengers had to drive fourteen miles to another railroad. Among Dr. Warner's fellow-travelers were an Ohio woman and her twin daughters. The woman was Mrs. Stephen Robinson, of Steuben county, Ohio. The daughters were named Isabella and Arabella. They were about twenty years of age, and as pretty a pair of girl twins as could be found in the entire country. With their mother they had been to Garner, Kan., to visit a brother of the girls and his family. They were returning home.

Widower John Warner was thrown in their company. During the transfer from one railroad to another a rainstorm came up. Gellant John Warner had an umbrella. He offered it to the ladies. The offer was accepted, and thenceforth John Warner, then a prosperous banker, became a part of the Robinson party. That is where and how the second romance of Dr. John Warner started.

John Warner, banker, had fallen in love with pretty Isabella Robinson. He wrote her many letters bubbling over with love. He went to see her in her Ohio home once, but was not entertained on the Robinson farm. He went again in May, 1874, and stayed three days. When he returned to Clinton he brought home with him Isabella Robinson as his bride. He then had, besides Vespasian Warner, another child, a daughter, who is now Mrs. Flora McDermott, of Orange, Conn. The marriage took place on May 23.

WIFE TO REMARRY DIVORCED HUSBAND

Leaves West Virginia to
Join First Love in
Ecuador.

PARKERSBURG, W. Va., Aug. 17.—Parkerburg's social set were given a genuine surprise when it was announced that Mrs. Elizabeth Cash was to be re-married to her divorced husband, Walter S. Cash. Several days ago, Mrs. Cash left the city. After her departure members of the family gave out the information that she would sail for Ecuador, South America, where Mr. Cash has extensive business interests, and on her arrival there would be remarried.

The announcement of the wedding was a complete surprise to Parkerburgers. When Mrs. Cash got her divorce some years ago, Mr. Cash left for other parts. He has not been seen here since, though it is said the two corresponded regularly. After the marriage Mr. and Mrs. Cash will remain in Ecuador for several years, as Mr. Cash has interests that will keep him there that long. Mrs. Cash is the daughter of Mrs. G. W. Thompson.

DISARMAMENT SUBJECT RENEWED AT THE HAGUE

THE HAGUE, Aug. 17.—The subject of disarmament today occupied the attention of the delegates to the International Peace Conference.

Sir Edward Fry, heading the English delegation, brought the question to the fore, offering several amendments to the program submitted provisionally that Great Britain will agree to limiting military and naval forces.

He was followed by Joseph Choate, for the United States, who declared his country believes its duty is clear to support disarmament.

President Neldoff delivered a long speech urging harmony on the subject. He declared that the sentiment of disarmament is bound to be realized some day, and urged the conference to take some action which will hasten the event.

NAIL IN HIS BRAIN, YET MAN LIVES

Iron Worker Has Fallen
From Great Heights
Many Times.

NEW YORK, Aug. 17.—William A. Albright, a Pennsylvania iron worker, who has probably fallen oftener from great heights and lived to tell the tale than any other man, is today fighting for life in the Williamsburg Hospital, after surgeons there, in operating on him for a fracture of the skull, removed a three-inch wire nail from his brain.

At first the surgeons could not believe their eyes, for it seemed as if no human being could live with an injury of that kind. The nail was withdrawn and the hemorrhage stopped in a few minutes, and then the doctors were astonished again. Albright rallied and continued to gain until it is believed he may recover.

During his fifteen years as an iron worker Albright has tumbled about forty times, but has seldom broken any bones. Recently he fell eighty-seven feet from a bridge over a roadway and was bruised only. One year ago he fell 100 feet from a bridge on Titusville into a river, from which he was rescued none the worse for his long drop.

LABORERS ASK CAR FARE, STRIKE FOR 30 CENTS

PENDLETON, Aug. 17.—Time work on the Lockport water trench was tied up today as the result of a strike. The large gang of Italians employed by the T. A. Gillespie Company, who has the contract for the Lockport water line, demanded an increase of 30 cents per day each. The demand was not granted this morning and the men quit.

The laborers claim that it costs them 30 cents per day car fare and ask that they be refunded for that expense, as the Gillespie Company, they claim, promised that when they came to Pendleton.

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